1346

AN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

1793

ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF

ENGLAND

AND

IRELAND.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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AN

ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF

ENGLAND

AND

R. England, Peoples

IRELAND.

IN WHICH

Is ſubmitted to their CONSIDERATION a PLAN for reſtoring the FREEDOM and VIGOUR of our CONSTITUTION, the INDEPENDENCE of PARLIAMENT, and the HAPPINESS of the PEOPLE.

More particularly adapted to the ELECTORS of the

COUNTY OF LIMERICK,

BY A FREEHOLDER OF THAT COUNTY.

"HEAR ME FOR MY CAUSE!"
SHAKESPEAR.

DUBLIN:
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by John Thomas Waller of Castletown Esq.

IRELAND

AND

ENGLAND

ADDRESS

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THOSE IN A MIDDLING

STATION OF LIFE,

IN THE

COUNTY of *LIMERICK*,

GENTLEMEN,

I ADDRESS this work more particularly to you, becauſe it is among ſuch people, that Virtue and Patriotiſm, with all their concomitant bleſſings, are more generally to be found; and becauſe

it

it is from men of your deſcription, that we muſt hope for the reſtoration of our conſtitution, and the promotion of public happineſs. But when I addreſs you, I addreſs you as men, who have ſpirit to act like men, to reſent the oppreſſions that have been laid upon you, and to exert the moſt generous efforts to emerge from them. I addreſs the Volunteers of HEAVEN-BORN LIBERTY! I ſhould be ſorry to be ſuppoſed, to hold forth the language of ſedition; far be it from me, whoſe only wiſh is to ſee our conſtitution untainted. My only aim is

to

to lay before your eyes a ſyſtem, by which you, and only you, can reſcue our country from being a nation of ſlaves; where the perſon who can fail in his engagements with his conſtituents will be ennobled, and where the prudent and honeſt man, muſt paſs a life of obſcurity. A ſyſtem, that muſt truly ennoble each county that eſpouſes it, and muſt act forcibly, although many ſhould ſlaviſhly reject it. To you then I addreſs it; for where ſhould it be nurtured, if not in the generous arms of Independence? and where ſhould there, or can there be

more

more Independence than among ourſelves? eſpecially when united in ſo great and glorious a cauſe, as that of endeavouring to reſtore, to its priſtine courſe, our pure, our free conſtitution.

I am, Gentlemen,

With much truth,

Your moſt faithful

And obedient ſervant,

The AUTHOR.

AN

AN

ADDRESS, &c.

AS the ſervice of my country is my ſole motive for appearing in print, I ſhall not apologize for any blemiſhes of this performance, nor attempt an higher flight than is conſiſtent with a moderate capacity. The following propoſal is for thoſe (the moſt uſeful of mankind) the middling men of theſe kingdoms, and adapted to

the intellectual ſcale, particularly of the perſons of the county of Limerick, with whom I am beſt acquainted. But leſt it may be thought the airy production of ſome ſpeculative recluſe, or fanciful viſionary, I ſhall, when called upon by my country, produce a perſonal ſecurity of twenty thouſand pounds, towards the ſecurity of this ſcheme, which is, it is apprehended, what very few authors can give for the integrity of their intentions, or the goodneſs of their projects. But let us proceed to buſineſs.

Our conſtitution conſiſts of a King, an Houſe of Lords, and an Houſe of Commons. When each of theſe unite in opinion, whatſoever they agree to is an act of parliament; and either our two houſes of parliament

are

are uſeleſs, or no other power can interfere in laws relative to Ireland.

The firſt eſtate of our conſtitution the regal dignity, is hereditary.

The ſecond, conſiſting of Lords, is the ſame.

The third is therefore the only one of the three, in which the people have a power, as a new Houſe of Commons is every eight years appointed and choſen by them, and which principally repreſents them, and them only.

This Houſe conſiſts of 300 members, but 64 being returned for counties, the remaining 236 are either repreſentatives of cities or boroughs,

roughs, except two for the College of Dublin.

From theſe 236, I ſhall deduct about 24, who are choſen by free ſuffrage, and then there will remain who repreſent boroughs 212, we will ſay 200, which conſtitute a great majority. Theſe boroughs of courſe are the Commons of Ireland, as every thing in that houſe is decided by a majority, which majority they return. Our purſe is in their hands, our liberties and our properties depend greatly on them. All bills chiefly originate from them, and they are the bulwark between King and People.

I think, I have plainly proved, that thoſe who repreſent the aforeſaid boroughs, form a majority.

We

We now come to the moſt melancholy truth of the whole, which is, that all, or the moſt of thoſe boroughs, which ſhould elect with judgment and freedom this majority, are become private property, and are as undoubtedly, and nearly as publicly ſold, as bullocks, ſheep or wool.

Thus is the ſtream of our once pure conſtitution ſullied, and thus men of ſmall properties creep into the houſe, and venture their all, in hopes of being found uſeful for miniſterial influence.

To aboliſh boroughs, and elect the whole 300 by County Freeholders, is a pleaſing but impracticable ſcheme, therefore I ſhall not further mention it, or ſome other ſchemes I have heard full

full as impoſſible. That I ſhall propoſe depends on the generality of freemen, and ſhould they adopt it, both Great-Britain and Ireland may enjoy the nobleſt conſtitution ever handed down to poſterity, and his Majeſty a more glorious monarchy than has ever yet ſubſiſted.

My plan I ſhall firſt lay down, and with it ſuch rules, as immediately occur, and ſhall conclude with pointing out the great, the glorious benefits that muſt attend the putting it in practice, without deſcending to particulars; beſides, I ſhall candidly point out, and obviate all the apparent objections, that may be made to ſuch a plan, as I have no doubt, but a ſwarm of miniſterial hirelings will be let out, who, on their own accounts,

counts, will endeavour to depreciate ſo glorious a ſyſtem, and ſhall conclude with full anſwers to each of them.

MY PLAN IS THIS.

I. That ſuch a ſum of money ſhould be raiſed in each county, by ſubſcription, in every eight years, as will purchaſe half, or as many as they can, of the ſeats for ſaid term, in the ſeveral boroughs of ſaid county.

II. That ſaid ſum ſhall be applied every general election, to purchaſe ſeats in boroughs, on the moſt moderate conditions, which ſeveral ſums ſhall be honeſtly paid, on perſons appointed by a majority of ſaid ſubſcribers, being choſen for ſuch boroughs.

III. That

III. That every ſubſcriber of one guinea per annum, ſhall have a vote in chuſing members for each borough, that ſhall be thus bought.

IV. That no ſubſcriber under 50l. ſhall be put up as a candidate for any ſuch borough.

V. That each candidate pitched on by ſaid ſubſcribers, as a proper perſon, ſhall ſign a bond of 4000l. to ſaid ſubſcribers, to be forfeited when he votes contrary to the deſire of his conſtituents, or the majority of them, during the ſaid eight years.

VI. That none but gentlemen of ſound intellects and good principles ſhall be appointed.

VII. That

VII. That each perſon ſo elected, ſhall pay half the purchaſe of ſuch ſeat out of his private purſe.

VIII. That ſhould an overplus ariſe, from the number of well-wiſhers to the cauſe of Freedom, or from the proper management of ſuch ſums, ſo ſubſcribed in the intermediate ſpace of elections, it ſhall go towards ſupporting one or two candidates, according to the fund, choſen from the aforeſaid aſſociation, for the county.

IX. That no one be Treaſurer, but a gentleman who will act without ſalary, who is perſonal ſecurity for 10,000l. and who ſhall give every proper ſatisfaction, before the ſubſcriptions are paid in.

X. That no one ſhall have a vote in ſaid band of Freemen, who does not pay punctually, within the year.

N. B. Should this plan be approved of, when the ſeveral ſubſcribers meet, they would think of many more minute rules that may be neceſſary for the properly conducting ſo patriotic a ſcheme.

Next, I ſhall ſketch out, as plainly as poſſible, with what eaſe this plan may be purſued.

We will ſuppoſe, one county with another, to poſſeſs two boroughs, many have more (Corke has eleven) and many leſs, as Clare, Fermanagh, Monaghan,

Monaghan, &c. The ſum to be raiſed, rating them at the higheſt, would be four thouſand pounds, as the candidates ſhould pay the remainder. I ſhall calculate next, how many would ſubſcribe fifty pounds, each eight years, to entitle them to be candidates for ſaid boroughs.

In this I ſhall be guided by the county I live in, and imagine, on an average, that it is pretty much the ſame in every part of this kingdom, though in the next much ſuperior. On a minute enquiry, therefore, I have reckoned ſixty, but am certain there would be at leaſt thirty, which would fund the ſum of 1500l.

From very good authority I can affirm, that there are in the county of Limerick 1500 who have votes, one third of which may be ſuppoſed to conſiſt of warm, independent men, in the middling ſtation of life, void of ambition, and who wiſh to enjoy their competency in ſecurity, neither to be bled to feed the drones of the hive, to pay unreaſonable taxes, nor to have their properties or families expoſed to the intruſion of revenue harpies. Among theſe I reckon the generality of our clergy, who are gentlemen in general of liberal educations, and of courſe, principles. Though I flatter myſelf, there are 500 ſuch, yet I ſhall only ſuppoſe 264, which will make each year's ſubſcription 300l. This ſum, with a very little attention, will make

make in eight years (allowing the year it is paid in intereſt free) and afterwards at no more than four per cent, about (for I would not be too exact and give cauſe for objection) 2500l. though it would certainly amount to much more, this and the former 1500l. with like intereſt, would make 500l. above the ſum required.

As I wiſh to make this as clear as poſſible, I will put it down in ſtill a plainer manner.

The

The FIRST YEAR,

	£.
Paid in by 30 gentlemen, - -	1500
Ditto, by 264 freeholders of ſpirit,	300
	1800

SECOND YEAR,

Paid in by ditto,	300
	2100

THIRD YEAR,

Intereſt of ditto, ſum at 4l. per cent,	80	
Paid by ſaid ſubſcription		300
		2400

FOURTH YEAR,

		£.
By ditto, ſum intereſt,	92	2400
Ditto, by ſaid ſub-ſcription, - -		300

FIFTH YEAR,

Intereſt 2700l. -	104	2700
Ditto, paid by ſub-ſcription, - -		300

SIXTH YEAR,

Intereſt 3000l. -	116	3000
Ditto, by ſaid ſub-ſcription, - -		300
		3300

SEVENTH

SEVENTH YEAR,

		£.
Intereſt 3300l. - -	126	3300
Ditto, by ſaid ſub-		
ſcription, - -		300

EIGHTH YEAR,

No Intereſt charged,	520	3600
Said ſubſcription, -		300
Intereſt, - -		520
		4420
If intereſt charged the		
eighth year, it will		
make the ſum, -	140	140
		£. 4560

This

This overplus may go, as I before obſerved, to the ſupporting of one or two members of the ſubſcribers for the county or city, and would lye in the breaſts of the generous and patriotic ſubſcribers to diſpoſe of otherwiſe as they ſhould be inclined; would largely make up any deficiency in this calculation, and the whole would ſtill anſwer another moſt laudable purpoſe, as the ſeveral ſums lent out at ſo low an intereſt as four per cent. might be given on good ſecurity to ſuch of the ſubſcribers, as might be in want of ſuch aſſiſtance.

It will evidently appear that this calculation, is both unſtudied, and much behind the probable amount.

A ſeat in a Borough is valued at two thouſand pounds, yet ſuch is ſold often much under; beſide was our plan to ſucceed, the prices would fall in all likelihood to half or quarter the ſum, when we were certain of a majority of righteous and uncorrupt Repreſentatives: As it is certain Adminiſtration would not bribe when there was no chance of ſucceeding in any debate, and of courſe there would be no temptation of buying what could not be ſold again to an advantage.

Among numberleſs other advantages that would attend our ſcheme, it would at the end make the rotten part of our conſtitution ſo cheap, that Boroughs might again be permitted

mitted to enjoy their priſtine virtue: beſide another palpable advantage would be, that vacancies would happen during the eight years, which although filled up from among the fifty pound ſubſcribers, yet as they muſt pay half on admiſſion, it would add largely to the fund.

Thus, my countrymen, (for nothing but a ſmall arm of the ſea is between us) each gentleman, who is ſpirited enough to ſerve his country in the ſenate may, at half price, have that opportunity, and every freeholder for a guinea a year may vote into parliament four honeſt and capable men, beſides two for the county, and two more, perhaps, for the city. They will be of four times the conſequence they are now, and ſhould this deſi-

rable mode be followed, a majority of virtuous men muſt cauſe ſuch a cloſe enquiry into the expenditure of Public Money, into uſeleſs places, and unmerited penſions, as muſt in the end bring about ſuch a relaxation from taxes, as will fully repay the generous ſpirits who enter into ſuch ſubſcriptions, and bleſs his Majeſty with a kingdom of people and riches, loyal from the ſenſation of happineſs, and able and willing to ſupport his throne againſt all his enemies.

As for objections, I foreſee many, but I confeſs, not one that I do not conceive eaſily anſwered.

Firſt, it is not practicable.

Is

Is it ſo hard to find two hundred and ſixty four out of one thouſand five hundred, who would not contribute one guinea a year to ſave their country?

Secondly, It would be impoſſible to find thirty in each county that would lay down fifty pounds and one thouſand to repreſent without an eye to buſineſs. How wretched is that county that could not boaſt of fifty, whoſe eaſy fortunes and honeſt hearts, would gladly enter into ſuch bonds as Freedom dictates? In ſhort, if we are ſuch ſlaves as would not wiſh to be free, we ſhould deſerve to be ſtigmatized to poſterity as the Capadocians and Helots were before us. However, ſuppoſing there would not be

be thirty, who from the principles of honour and honeſty would ſubſcribe fifty pounds towards this ſcheme, yet put it on the footing of a lottery, ſurely at the eaſy rate of ſix pounds five ſhillings per year, they have a fair chance of one thouſand pounds, as they will in all likelihood come in at half price for ſome ſeat, within that term, as eight are to be choſen out of thirty (being a fifth of the whole) and a proper rotation kept up, not to mention how many vacancies may fall out in that time. How many gentlemen of large properties who would ſubſcribe for themſelves and ſons; how many patriotic lords, that would give ſix pounds a year to preſerve the liberties of the people; and how many on their death beds would bequeath a ſum for promoting ſo deſirable an end?

end? Mankind is not bad in general, would wiſh to be free, and ſurely no freedom could be purchaſed on more reaſonable terms than at a guinea a year, the pooreſt ſum given at a horſe courſe.

Third objection will be, many counties have more Boroughs than two, and there may not be a probability of raiſing a ſubſcription equal to all.

My anſwer is, the largeſt counties in general have the moſt Boroughs, and of courſe have the greateſt ability; however, let them but purchaſe two, will they not by ſo doing in all probability prevent four venal members from forming a part of our legiſlature,

giſlature, and add to the phalanx of freedom? Beſides, I will further obſerve, that if the thirty-two counties ſend ſixty-four honeſt members to parliament (which by having ſuch a generous band of freemen in each county will be more likely, if this ſucceeds than ever) ſuch a reſpectable number may greatly contribute to the promotion of the public welfare.

We will next ſuppoſe from our College and our principal cities, twelve at leaſt. Add then four for each county of purchaſed ſeats, which makes one hundred and twenty-eight, and the whole will be far beyond a majority in three hundred. As to farther objections I foreſee them not,

but

but when they arife, will take upon me with eaſe to confute them. In ſhort, there can be none if we wiſh to be free.

Freedom may be had cheaply; thoſe who wiſh to form our Palladium of Liberty will be eaſily gratified, as there will be eight vacancies, and a proper rotation may be allowed: Such as wiſh well to our Original Conſtitution, and to hand it down cleanſed from its preſent filth to their poſterity, may each for a guinea a year be gratified. They will have the pleaſure of returning, in all likelihood, eight members to parliament, and the heart-felt ſatisfaction of yield-

ing their mite to the public happineſs.

To enter into the enormous liſts of Places and Penſions, the numbers of appointments, where the douceurs would amply pay without a ſalary, where the deputy's pay, who do all the work, would ſuffice without a parliamentary overſeer, the wanton, the unbounded, the ſhameful and nefarious charges on an honeſt and loyal people, in favour of ------- honourable men, would not come within the bounds of ſo ſmall a work; therefore, I ſhall only add the evident advantages of the above ſcheme, which is undoubtedly attainable, and muſt,

if

if put in execution, work its own purpoſes.

Should this take place, ſhould the Gentry, Clergy, and Freeholders, at this time, when our guardian angel ſeems fraught with hope, and anxiouſly leans to attend the workings of the Divine Spirit of Freedom within us, agree, that we ſhall be free, it is done, the plan is laid: our noble aſſociations are our guard, and our Sovereign is gracious

We have been long ſlaves to ourſelves, religious clouds diſperſe at day, we worſhip one and the ſame God, we inhabit one and the ſame

country, let us help each other as Freemen, not as Slaves, and let our attachments proceed from the ebullitions of gratitude and love, not the mean and tardy grudgings of diſcontent and neceſſity.

I am a Proteſtant, and think I have a right to follow that reaſon that has been given me to diſtinguiſh right from wrong; and why ſhould not a Roman Catholic have the ſame? Here let us guard each o-thers properties, it is our reci-procal intereſt; and let us all travel to the untried and immortal ſtate by that road, we think moſt likely to conduct us thither.

With

With the determination of Freemen, let us profecute this plan: By it, or by ſome ſuch ſcheme only, can our taxes be leſſened, our revenues augmented, and our national debt diſcharged.

From the gleanings of diſſipation a ſum will ariſe, that will reclaim the preſent ſcandalous wilds of this kingdom, by which a third will be added to it, and of courſe we ſhall have a third more of middling men, who may in future ſubſcribe for the ſalvation of their country.

Viribus,

Viribus, ingenio, Specie, Virtute, loco, re,
Extremi primorum extremis usque Priores.

6 DE 58

F I N I S.